291 speaking. (1) Is this custom in some way related to modesty? The
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1. See Chapter VI, Article VI.

[606] same question may be raised with respect to another strict rule of decorum which forbids a man to look his mother-in-law in the face. (2)

2. For details concerning this custom, see Chapter VI, Article V, 1.

It can readily be answered in the affirmative. (3)

3. Nevertheless, see Chapter X, Article II, 3.

784 The rule of decorum which forbids a man to sit down on a
516 seat where a woman is seated who is not his wife seems to me also to be dictated by sexual modesty. On the other hand, stepping over the seat under such circumstances has nothing whatever to do with this feeling. The purpose of this practice is to enable the person seated (regardless of sex) to avoid the evil repercussions of a charm or magic spell in his or her possession. (4)

4. Contrary to the explanation given by Jadot in Blancs et Noirs au Congo Belge (Whites and Blacks in the Belgian Congo), p. 90.

291 Is the native ashamed to show his nakedness? Let us beware
894 of answering this question in general terms. In order to have an idea of the situation which is sufficiently clear and precise, various cases and circumstances must be taken into account.

1) First of all it can be stated that in the normal course of daily living the Nkundó, men as well as women, do all they can to hide their genital organs. That is to say that basically they are

Article I. *Girls*

584 According to Nkundó custom it is acceptable for an expected child, not yet born or still very young, to be promised in marriage to X or Y. This practice was formerly very common and is still quite prevalent today. It is called banda bǒna or bǒmoto, literally, "to count a child" or "to count a woman." The ikulf is paid at the time of the promise. Later the matter is carried out in the usual fashion; the other parts of the bride price are paid either while the fiancée is young or, preferably, at the time when she goes to her husband.

584 855 Until that time, if one of the girl's relatives is already a wife of a polygamist husband-to-be or of one of his relatives, the child is brought up in her husband's family from a fairly early age, depending on the circumstances. She lives with her relative. She may be barely seven or eight years old, for example. If no one in her husband's clan can take care of her, [232] she spends only one or two weeks there to become acquainted, little by little, with people and places; she repeats the visit from time to time. Her mother accompanies her, for being so young she could not get used to being there alone, without support, without her parents. Therefore it is necessary to wait till she is old enough to be somewhat independent and able to manage by herself. That time usually comes around the [185] beginning of puberty, thus sometime between the ages of twelve and fifteen.

584 853 Like an adult woman, she is already called bompfka or wǐif, depending on the portion of the bride price that has been paid. She has all the *duties and privileges of a wife: sexual relations, food* preparation, care of the household, etc. There is no set date or age for the beginning of cohabitation. This matter is settled between the husband and his parents-in-law. The latter do not have the right to [602] delay the time, even if their daughter is still too young, but they can make use of their great influence over their son-in-law. The modern [176] generation is not shocked by sexual relations between an adulterer [sic] [571] and a girl who has not reached puberty. Besides, all is in order from the legal standpoint; since the man has paid the bride price, he is the

and those who owe submission and respect. The "superior" relatives are the ascendants, uncles, aunts, etc., in short, all those bearing the title of "father" or "mother," as well as elder brothers (elder sisters, elder cousins, etc.), who are batɔ́mɔ́lɔ́ (sing. botɔ́mɔ́lɔ́). The "inferiors" are the descendants, those who are called "children" (bǐna): sons and daughters, grandsons, nephews, nieces, younger brothers or sisters, and those who are classed with them and called bakɛ́nɛ́ (sing. bokɛ́nɛ́).

4) Polygamy and the inheritance of widows introduce another element. We will see that although persons of certain degrees of affinity may not marry, the prohibition is lifted to permit the inheritance of widows.

5) Our term "relatives by marriage" the Nkundɔ́ term and bakilɔ́ are not synonymous, even with respect to direct affinity. When we use the term "relatives by marriage" here, we are speaking in Nkundɔ́ terms. They do not consider certain persons whom we would include in that category as "relations by marriage." Such persons are included in the group which as a whole is designated as likilɔ́ or bakilɔ́, but when properly and accurately referred to they are called bɔ́me, "husband," or wǎli, "wife," because they may marry each other and therefore affinity, strictly speaking, cannot be applied to them. In other words, for the Nkundɔ́, affinity is the relationship of a person with (only) those of his spouse's relatives whom he is forbidden to marry. It is well to bear in mind the double meaning of this term.

2. The rules

1. Direct Affinity

A. Marriages are prohibited in the direct line. Nevertheless, in accordance with consideration number 4, a son or grandson may inherit or marry the widows of his father or grandfather, but not the reverse. [254]

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Example 1

Bakando (F)
|
Mbóyó (M) + Esalé (F)

Mbóyó may never marry Bakando.

Example 2

Eale (M) + Boóné (F)
|
Mbélé (F)

Eale may never marry Mbélé.

Example 3

Bombembí (M)
|
Ikété (M) + Basáó (F)

Bombembí may never marry Basáó. (1)

[691]
[582]

1. If after the death of his son Ikété, Bombembí wanted to marry his widow, the mother of the deceased would be so angry and ashamed that she would irrevocably leave him. Such conduct on the part of a father during his son's lifetime would give the son full rights to vengeance (assamination, war with the help of the mother's clan, etc.), for it would be equivalent to a real disavowal of his son. But the case is purely hypothetical.

Example 4

Esalo (M) - Longé (F).
|
Lolété (M)

Lolété may marry Longé.

N.B. The same rules apply to grandparents and grandsons.

2. Indirect Affinity

A. Marriage among those of lineal relationship is forbidden but certain exceptions are permitted. There are two possibilities: with the father's wife (Example 16) and with the son's wife (Example 17).

Example 16

Mbembe (M) ∔ Ekila (F)

Itfina (M) ∔ Bokoba (F)

If Bokoba dies or is divorced from Itfina, the latter may marry Ekila, but this exception is not often made because they would be very open to unkind criticism. [257]

Example 17

Etsíé (M) ∔ Bokolí (F)

Njoku (M) ∔ Imfongé (F)

After Bokolí's death Etsíé is permitted to marry Imfongé. Such a marriage is more leniently regarded if Etsíé himself paid the bride price for Imfongé, for in that case he is preserving his capital in marrying her. This consideration may also apply during Bokolí's lifetime, if Imfongé does not want to remain with Njoku. Under such circumstances, however, Njoku's mother would oppose the marriage with all her power. If Etsíé does not listen to reason, he can expect a divorce or even war with Bokolí's clan, to whom he is doing a great injury by taking away his stepson's wife. After divorce Bokolí's kin may refuse to give Etsíé her new bride price and may give it directly to Njoku so that he can obtain a wife to replace the one that was taken from him.

593x 606 578 We should add that in some households, difficulties arise rather easily during the visits of parents or parents-in-law, because of the sensibilities, incompatibility of character, or discontent of one party who may consider the other guilty of discourtesy, lack of delicacy, disrespect, or stinginess toward the visiting parents. The same is true for the rearing of children. [273]

4. Punishments

593x 578 Nkundó law permits a husband to inflict corporeal punishment (bikínjwé, sing. ekínjwé) on his wife, its nature varying with the seriousness of the case. Obviously these sanctions, expressly [576] permitted by law, cannot give rise to claims on the woman's part or result in the obligation to pay a bodondo. [Editor's note: Unless, of course, the husband -- acting in excess of his rights -- is more violent than the occasion warrants for under such conditions, the wife, supported by her family, attacks the husband, who is then [684] forced to acknowledge the harm he has done and make reparation by means of a bodondo.] If she is hurt she may claim a supplementary payment called liombo (from the verb bomba) or "bandage" (for the wound); it consists of 5 rings or more, depending on the situation. [826] The loss or breaking of a tooth is considered a serious injury. For this is a real injury to the woman and, in the case of front teeth, to her beauty. (1) Of course, as explained above, the wife will first have

[304] 1. Because they are filed, the incisors are much less resistant than normal teeth. Teeth filing is practiced for reasons of beauty.

run home, and it is there that the dispute is examined.

593x 578 667 For the sake of a clearer understanding, let us go into a few details concerning the penal stipulations of Nkundó law in relation to the life of a married couple.

Usually, in a simple domestic quarrel, the couple does no more than tell each other some home truths, seasoning their speeches

593 Iongo of Bokɛ̄kyɛ̄ (Boselo, Bombwanja), married to Bokaa is 'Ifonda
574 of Bowɛ̄lɛ́; for Mbalaka, daughter of Bolekela wa Imangaiso of the
342 Basɛ̄kɛ̄ Lokuli (Bongɛ̄li), married to Mbuli is'ea Wela of Bombɔ̄ngo
556 w'Etefa (Bongale) (1) [286]

[531] 1. She bore the name of Mbɛ̄laka (meaning indemnity), because her father had solemnly proclaimed (-bɛ́kya) and publicly promised that he intended, one day, to place himself in the position of having to pay an indemnity because of his daughter, as proof of his love. Indeed [782] when Mbɛ̄laka was married, he killed one of his wives, cut her into pieces, and sent the "meat" to his son-in-law as "the first hen" that his wife would prepare for him. But he did not have to pay [602] [614] the indemnity because the victim's clan was too weak to attempt a war; they did not dare to make a claim and, in order to avoid even greater misfortunes, they resigned themselves to this revolting ignominy.

Article V

Relations Between the Husband and His Wife's Family

606 As has already been said, kinship by marriage is called likilɔ́,
607 and relatives by marriage are called bokilɔ́, bakilɔ́. Mbɔ̄tsolɔ́ is a term of respect for very close relatives by marriage (father-in-law, mother-in-law, sometimes brother-in-law or sister-in-law). When there is a considerable age difference between two affinal relatives, the elder one sometimes calls the younger bokilɔ́walɛ́. This happens most frequently when the son-in-law is so young that he can still be considered a child. This term can even be used by an elder brother

606 607 with reference to the young wife of his junior. (1)

1. The second component of this term is used by some Elinga as a synonym of bokilɔ́. It should be related to walé, a term which among the Mbole and the Bakutu denotes a girl who is boléɛmbɛ or a woman who has just given birth (the same is true among the Ekonda).

The present practice is to exclude from among the bakilɔ́ these persons with whom marriage is permitted. They are more frequently called "husband" or "wife."

The opposite of bokilɔ́ is bokanga. The bakanga are members of the family that has received the bride price, while the bakilɔ́ are those who have paid it. In common practice the word bokilɔ́ is often used in place of bokanga, but never the reverse. Bokilɔ́ l'ɔkanga is the expression denoting the whole group.

606 1. Father-in-law and mother-in-law

A husband owes respect, love, and assistance to his parents-in-law. This point is vital to harmony in the home. In this sphere a wife is very intolerant [287] of forgetfulness and even more of ill will. Offensive comments, insults pointed at parents-in-law even in their absence result in serious difficulties. Sometimes a husband expresses his bad humor or anger against his spouse in that way. This kind of behavior never wins approval, unless his in-laws first insulted him. The law of retaliation applies fully in this situation. The Nkundɔ́ say: ɔ́tswá mbɔ́ngɔ́ l'ɔ́ndamba oléngaka ɛ́k'ɔ́ndamba, "He who replies to evil comments is in the right, not the one who began." For a fuller discussion of this topic, see above (Article III).

606 577 431 To remain on good terms with his parents-in-law, the husband must visit them from time to time. By the very nature of things, his visits are less frequent than those of his wife. One reason why they cannot be too frequent is that the husband must bring gifts at each visit (belonga). One does not go to one's parents-in-law empty handed.

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481 The extent of the riches brought depends on circumstances. Some greedy persons hope for large gifts if their daughter's marriage proves stable. Others prefer not to receive too much, lest they be required to give back an equal amount and -- if they are not especially wealthy -- thus find themselves one day in great financial difficulties. For the [583] belonga are added to the sum total of the bride price and must therefore be restored, should the occasion arise.

The parents-in-law do not allow their son-in-law to depart without giving him countergifts as a farewell (belingako). These take the form of hens and ducks, and their value is added to the total amount of nkomi.

Neither son-in-law nor parents-in-law like to see the generosity of the other party exceed their own, except in a few unusual cases. As a matter of fact, this is a very intelligent policy; equality is maintained on both sides, so that there can be no reproaches on the grounds of greed or stinginess [288], and if the marriage should be dissolved, it would be easy to re-establish equilibrium.

A son-in-law is expected to help his father-in-law to an extent which varies with the situation and with his means. He may fell the trees of the forest for him or set up a field, he may build him a house or make a hunting enclosure (lokombo), etc. A good son-in-law never fails to fulfill these obligations, and the father-in-law does not let him leave without having given him some present.

It is very important to a wife that her husband acquit himself conscientiously of these duties of visiting and assisting her parents. His failure to do so would lead to serious palavers and their usual consequences.

The father-in-law, for his part, does not fail to help his son-in-law in his various tasks. When the work is completed, the latter gives him a bolingako of a few copper rings, which are included in belonga.

The visits of a woman's parents to their son-in-law are more frequent. It is their way of showing their love for him and their daughter and their interest in the household. The visits can last weeks and months, whether only one or both of the parents come. If they stay too long, they are accepted with less enthusiasm. Gifts (bolingako) must always be brought out when the farewells are said.

606 574 586 593x Even if the parents' union has been dissolved and the mother has remarried, she does not cease to visit her daughter and son-in-law. If her new husband seems not to agree to her going, difficulties result. And if he does not change his attitude, his behavior may cause his wife to leave him in order to return to her first husband, the girl's father.

606 574 431 585x Thus, visits are accompanied by an exchange of gifts which are belonga if given by the son-in-law, and part of the nkemf' valuables if given by the father-in-law. Farewell gifts are belonga [289] and part of the bride price if given by the son-in-law, part of the nkemf' if given by the father-in-law.

These same rules apply, mutatis mutandis, to various relatives on each side with respect to visits made, services rendered, and presents given on these occasions.

606 One very strict law regarding relations between son-in-law and parents-in-law should be noted: a man is forbidden to see the face of his wife's mother. This prohibition is scrupulously observed by all. He is allowed to see her face only once, at the beginning of the marriage, "to learn to know her so that they can avoid each other." If, for example, they meet while traveling in the forest, they must turn their backs to each other. Usually the woman turns her face toward the edge of the path to let her son-in-law pass. They greet each other by word of mouth, ask for each other's news, but do not shake hands or look at each other. It is funny for us to see a woman visiting her son-in-law. The two place themselves on each side of a partition or in two corners, and they talk in that way, asking for news, carrying on a discussion, etc., without seeing each other. Sometimes mother-in-law and son-in-law find themselves in each other's presence unexpectedly, in the forest or in the fields, without having seen each other approach or having been warned by anyone. They immediately turn their backs on each other; the man excuses himself and quickly disappears, even if to do so he has to plunge into a dense forest full of prickly and tangled creepers.

This law extends also to the husband's very close relatives, such as his younger brothers (who are also "husbands"), and to all

606 women called "mother," such as the mother's sisters and the father's wives. The law does not seem strictly applicable to these persons, but seems to cover them by extension. On the other hand, there is no comparable law with regard to a woman and her father-in-law.

606 578 A violation of this prohibition results in a great palaver, for it is considered a serious lack of respect. It may produce a serious domestic quarrel. [290] A wife will refuse to perform the conjugal act with her husband because he has looked at his mother-in-law. That is why people help each other by warning each other of the "danger" when their respective mothers-in-law arrive.

Compensation for the offense may be made by the payment of a boondo of several bakonga to the mother-in-law. As long as the payment has not been made, the wife will not fulfill her conjugal duties. After it has been made, everything goes back in order. If it is proved that the situation came about involuntarily, there is no palaver and no payment is required. Nowadays the best Christians tend to give a boondo once and for all to definitively settle any palaver that may occur in the future and to avoid the obligation of having to submit to this prohibition, since they are beginning to vaguely perceive its uselessness.

[551] A man is even forbidden to pronounce the name of his mother-in-law in her presence, even to address or call another person of the same name. In such a situation he must resort to a surname or paraphrase. Usually he addresses her as mbɔtsolɔ. An infraction of this rule results in the same punishment as if a man were to look at his mother-in-law.

606 If we ask the Nkundɔ to give us the reason for this custom, as it is so strange to our point of view, they reply that they are ashamed or embarrassed to see the women who begot their wives, and that to do so would be a grave offense to her. The custom is a means of expressing the respect a son-in-law owes his mother-in-law, and of avoiding unceremonious behavior or too great a familiarity toward her. That is all the explanation they give. For our philosophical turn of mind, it does not exhaust the subject. We are tempted to look for a connection between the intimate relations of the married couple and

606 the act of procreation on the part of one of them. Perhaps this idea is latent in the native mind, or at least is at the basis of this rule. The fact that this hypothesis applies only to the wife's mother-in-law [mother?] does not weaken it; for in native eyes [291] the other instances are entirely without importance. (1)

1. See, for example, Chapter II, Article X, and Chapter V, Articles II and III.

606 292 Another regulation pertaining to the mother-in-law requires that she -- and all the women who are given the same title in current usage -- may appear in her son-in-law's village only when dressed in a boleleke. A boleleke is a banana leaf, either green or dried, which has been torn in several places perpendicularly to the large [765] central rib, and constitutes the first and principal sign of mourning. Moreover, Batswa women must also dress in this manner before entering a Baotó settlement. The following reason is given for the rule in the second instance: a Botswá woman's dress consists of a lolímba, a belt of small braided ropes about 10 centimeters long. Although in ordinary positions the lolímba provides fairly good protection, it is not considered adequate to really stop all indiscreet looks. And it is popularly believed that if a Bootó sees a Botswá woman's genital organs, she will die. Might we conclude from this last explanation that there is a fundamental connection between the reasons that necessitate the wearing of a boleleke in these three instances? Or is the mother-in-law to imitate a Botswá woman and thus show a certain subordination to her son-in-law?

2. Female relatives

607 837 As long as they are free, that is, as long as no bride-price payment has been made for them, a woman's sisters or cousins are considered by her husband as his wives, and he calls them so (basíf). This term is applied only to relatives of a generation below that of the true wife or to members of the same generation who are younger than she and with whom marriage [292] is permitted. It is therefore never

607 extended to relatives with whom marriage prohibited, such as nieces
837 who are banankáná, who are his wife's "mothers." (1)

1. See Chapter V, Article IV and the examples cited there (for instance, examples 25, 26, 17).

When such relatives of the wife marry, the situation changes. They belong to another man, and a continuation of the same practice as when they are single produces very serious cases of adultery. There are differences depending on the degree of affinity, however. In addition to the usual sanctions against adultery, other measures may be taken, especially the dissolution of the marriage. An especially serious case, but one which is more or less hypothetical, would be adultery between a man and his father-in-law's wife; a special feeling of shame is connected with it, and our Nkundó say that the two persons are like a Botswá and his master. Misconduct with the wife of a brother-in-law (or cousin-in-law) is also a very serious matter. The latter may take his sister (or cousin) away from the guilty husband and thus break the marriage. The same applies to adultery with a nyangólólá (1)

1. See Chapter V, Article IV and the examples given there (for instance, examples 25, 26, 17).

3. Legal matters

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Here we must examine the manner in which breaches of the law are settled between parents-in-law and son-in-law. It is known that among these peoples justice, in the strict sense of the word, is one of the most prominent aspects of social legislation. Theft is one of the principal causes for shame and was formerly severely punished. The thief, especially if he continued to repeat his offence, could be sold as a slave.

606 685 If one of the wife's relatives were found guilty of stealing from his (or her) relative by marriage, or even from one of the latter's relatives, the family tribunal was assembled. Out of consideration for the ties of kinship between the thief and the wife and in order not to sadden her and her family, the guilty person was not sold as a slave. He was simply turned over to the woman [293] and her family, and they were told: "Here he is; he has been found guilty of theft and should have been reduced to slavery. Out of respect for you, however, we are not selling him; we are rolling (-kilimola) him toward you. Take him as bride price and add him to the sum of the bosɔngo." Thus the matter was settled in a friendly fashion. If subsequently there was a divorce, the wife's family had to restore not only the bride price that had been paid but also an additional slave for the member of their group that the husband had yielded in this fashion. Thus, the transaction was not at all a fictional one.

Conversely, the same procedure was adopted in relation to a relative of the husband who had violated the rules of justice to the detriment of a member of the family related by marriage. But in that case the extradition of the guilty party was considered as the addition of a slave to the amount of the nkɔmɛ.

[539] Hence the saying: bokilɔ ntɔwɛkɛ ndɛ ngond'ɛy'okanga, "a parent-in-law cannot die in the forest of his relatives by marriage."

The situation is no different nowadays. The only change is that, instead of giving back a slave if a dissolution of the marriage occurs, the equivalent value is paid in copper rings, etc.

727 606 The same customs governed conduct toward prisoners of war. For instance, in the course of a war Eale became the master of Bombolo, whose cousin is married to Iloko, a close relative of Eale. Iloko interceded with Eale in order to obtain Bombolo's freedom, and Bombolo was sent home but was to be considered as bosɔngo. The liberated prisoner thus was classed as a slave given as part of the bride price, as in the preceding case, and all the appropriate rules were followed.

602 brings forth reprimands on the part of the husband and his parents which obviously can easily degenerate into quarrels. If the omissions are so frequent and of such a nature that they can no longer be explained as simply forgetting, a whim, or a fit of peevishness, but [299] are taken to indicate spitefulness or vulgarity, the matter is [627] brought before the ndonga (who is often assisted by the family tribunal) or brought before the authority constituted by the woman's kin. If in spite of everything the expected improvement does not take place, the break-up is inevitable.

606 The husband's father and mother extend the same affection to their son's wife as they feel toward him. They consider her their own child, and it is not unusual to find that their love for the wife equals their feeling for their own son. She is only a relative by marriage, but out of affection for her they call her their child. She, for [601] her part, does not use toward them the term bakanga (or bakilō) but out of filial respect calls them "father" and "mother." Exceptions to this practice may be found, however.

606 224 If the father (and those who fall in the same category such as uncles, elder brothers, etc.) kills a large game animal, he is expected to give his son's (or brother's, etc.) wife a piece of meat, whose size depends on the number of daughters-in-law he has and which consists of one or several chops (bokalako) (1) and the piece at

1. Called lieto among the Bolenge and the tribes of the Losanganya.

the nape of the neck (botombya).

606 835 Illicit relations between the husband's father and his daughter-in-law would be an unheard of crime. The same would be true with respect to any of the "superior" relatives. (2) The laws regulating

[178 184]

2. Only the Boangi -- like the Elanga of the Losanganya - allow relations between a brother and the wife of his junior, and they are already beginning to find imitators among their neighbors to the southeast, the Inpolo.

606 the relations between a wife and her husband's parents are closely
605 connected with the rules pertaining to the prohibition related to affinity and seems to spring from the same source. Therefore it will be useful to have in mind what we have said in the preceding chapter, Article IV.

The husband's elder brothers treat his wife as their sister.
607 The wife calls her husband's sisters [300] bakilɔ́, but out of respect she often gives them the title of "mother." (1)

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1. Among the Elãngá the wife also calls her husband's sisters bongíli (pl. bangíli); they call her bɔ̌nongíli (pl. bɔ̌nangíli). A wife often calls her husband's mother nyangɔ́ngíli. Bɔ̌nangíli l'ɔ̌nangíli means "the brother's wives and their sisters-in-law."

After the husband's death, as has been said suo loco, his father
587 or his brother may marry his widow. But this practice is not well regarded and is permitted only rarely, chiefly when the scattering of the family patrimony is feared or if the two interested parties have an unusual love for each other.

With respect to children or younger brothers and all those who
597 fall into that category, the situation is altogether different. Illicit
602 relations with wives of their father, grandfather, uncle, elder brother, or elder cousin, are judged much less severely. Generally, misconduct does not give rise to claims for payment, or the payment is demanded "for form's sake" and consists of a hen and a bunch of bananas. By means of this payment the guilty one recognizes his error and renders homage to the right of his elder.

In general public opinion condemns these relations and often
[624] with great severity. The question of degree of kinship as well as other considerations result in a great diversity among the cases, so we will examine each situation separately and distinguish each time between the husband's reaction and that of public opinion.

837 431 substituted for all these items. As a rule the woman demands some remuneration although there are exceptions, which may be frequent or rare, depending on the region and on the nature of the persons involved. They are due to extraordinary passion or to the woman's love for her lover. (1)

1. See Chapter I, Part 1, Article IV.

3. Evidence of adultery

837 684 The strength of the evidence may vary.

1) The strongest evidence is finding the couple in flagrante delicto. No objection will hold up against it, and it constitutes for the application of the severest sanctions. The act must be observed by the husband. The testimony of a third party is never introduced. If another person discovers the adultery and favors the husband, that person will inform the latter so that he can take precautions in order to catch the culprits personally. If it is discovered by the woman's father or other close relative who favors the husband, [666] he informs the latter and, if possible, calls him to witness the infraction himself. If he does so, the husband must give the indemnity to his father-in-law. This is not a legal obligation but one imposed by good relations and decorum, since the father-in-law has shown good will and affection toward his son-in-law.

2) A wife's admission is almost as important and always decisive. Such a confession mitigates her husband's anger toward her and directs it chiefly toward her accomplice. Therefore most women do not hesitate to denounce their paramours if they feel somewhat cornered. (On the other hand, women never denounce each other.) [314]

3) A third form of evidence can be obtained by surprising the lovers while they are planning a meeting. The husband can accuse them on the spot and try to extract a complete confession from his wife on the subject of the past or the future. If possible he assures himself of the co-operation of witnesses. If he foresees a denial on his wife's part, he lets the occasion pass and looks for a good opportunity to surprise the culprits in the act. Regardless of the

In every case at least a few beéngo in addition to the bombémbé and the bɔsɔ́ w'ilakí are always claimed. The latter payments can never be omitted. The belt is a payment made exclusively to the mother and by rights it goes to the mother's clan.

The higher the amount of these funeral payments, the more the son-in-law is welcome. The alliance is perfect. Therefore, not only will the wife's family reciprocate his fine feelings by adding a few more dogs, but in addition the son-in-law will be well received and successful in his application when, after the period of mourning, he brings the sum of the ibɔ́lɛɔ́ko in order to obtain a substitute for the deceased. (2) In addition, if the relations with

2. See Chapter III, Article IV.

his in-laws have been excellent, he will easily obtain the substitute in advance, so that she can care for him during the entire mourning period.

There are severe sanctions against the omission of the funeral payments. [439] Neglecting to send the notification gift alone is enough to set these in motion. They are: the breaking off of the affinal relationship; the loss of the children, since the father's offense is equal to a repudiation; and finally molestation of the culprit by the spirit of the deceased. Thus at Bokítola (Bompela) one can find two boys, Bosítsí and Ikembá, the children of Bonyongela of Ilángí and Etíka of Bokítola. They have now been incorporated into their mother's clan, because their father did not send a nsango. On stronger grounds the same is true for the whole nkunji.

Article V. The Social Position of a Widow

In Chapter III, Articles II and IV, we have already noted that in the eyes of the Nkundó, the death of the husband does not dissolve a marriage. The union continues, and even after mourning it is not broken ipso facto. Even to have the woman taken and treated as a wife by another man is not enough to end it. As

000 the same rights as the other children of the polygynist.

595 The polygynist always sought to increase the number of his
556 wives, for his prestige rose and his fortune increased in that manner.
593 If anyone in civilized lands seeks to enlarge his fortune, this is done, people say, in order to insure the future of his children. The native thinks little about that; his primary idea is to enjoy himself and to surpass others in prestige and esteem. As far as the future of his children is concerned, there are polygynists who possess twenty or thirty wives or even more, and sometimes they have only one or two children. Also it is little in keeping with their notions to care for the future; he who is still alive tomorrow must take care of
595 tomorrow then, so they reason. On the contrary, instead of caring
593 for his children, the polygynist often took great trouble to obtain a
594 wife for his son. The son, however, was not yet the owner of his
606 wife; it was, so to speak, only a loan. Not until after the death of his father did he become owner. In some districts, when the father had obtained a wife for his son, he first kept this wife for some time for himself. Only after a few months did he give her to his son. In
595 other districts, when the wife was pregnant by the son, he was obliged
593 to send her for a few days to his father. He was not allowed to bear
606 the honor of fatherhood alone; his father must share that with him.
842 The father reserved for himself the honor of naming all of the chil-
551 dren of his children. In some areas of the Congo, morals were so
835 low and common that the father even kept his own daughters in his harem. This did not occur in Equatorial Africa, but there was a custom that was not much better. The magician was sometimes
595 consulted about the bride price which the father tried to get for his
711 daughter, or the brother for his sister.

The magician then gave them the advice that they themselves should first have relations with their own daughter or sister. This custom existed almost everywhere in Equatorial Africa.

583 [535] Bride Price. In general, the daughter was given in marriage upon payment of a bride price. The father had little choice of the future husband of his daughter. The one who guaranteed the most goods in payment was certain to get her. Since, in most cases, the little daughter had not yet arrived at the years of maturity, there was naturally no question of her consent. The bride price was not paid all at once, but gradually during the years while the daughter grew up. Since the daughter was given without her consent